

Weekly Column for January 11, 2007

Today's column will deal with one of my favorite topics- resident involvement in their neighborhoods.

Earlier this week I received an e-mail from Councilman Mark McGrath about a video that surfaced on the Internet regarding criminal activity in his district. The video centered on activities inside of the Community Grocery at 3100 Sixth Avenue.

After watching the video I immediately forwarded it to Police Chief Nicholas Kaiser so that the police could investigate. In the days following, we have seen significant progress.

Four police officers were stationed outside of the store last night to monitor the activity occurring inside. At one point a vehicle carrying four teenagers parked in front of them. The group got out of the car with the intention of robbing a nearby house. In a classic case of "right place at the right time," the officers thwarted the attempted robbery before making several additional arrests Wednesday night inside of the store.

Today, members of Code Enforcement, Community Policing, and the Fire Department inspected the store, and the result is it has been indefinitely closed for numerous health and safety concerns.

After an initial inspection, officials found more than 30 violations in the grocery store. A significant number of problems were also observed in the building adjacent to the store. The store has access to this property, and our Code Enforcement official discovered more than 80 5-gallon containers of used and new cooking oil, as well as an additional two 50-gallon drums, and one 40-gallon drum full of the same substance.

We are always spreading the message that nuisances such as this store are a detriment to our neighborhoods and the City of Troy as a whole. With quick action by the police and code enforcement we arrested individuals determined to commit a crime, and closed a store that was the definition of unsafe. We will not tolerate this type of activity, and those that openly flaunt it will pay the ultimate price.

I want to thank Councilman McGrath, and the residents in his district for being observant and attentive to conditions of their area. If you have a problem in the City of Troy- let us know. We will investigate it and we will fix it. And those that seek to damage our City will continue to find out that they are not welcome here, and will be dealt with.

The City will pursue nuisance abatement on this building, and at the moment there is no timetable for it to reopen.

This story should serve as the ultimate reminder that working together we can accomplish goals that improve the quality of life for all of Troy.

Thanks and have a great weekend.

Harry J Tutunjian
Mayor of Troy